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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2014

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/69/468/Add.5)*]

69/221. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 68/213 of 20 December 2013, as well as other resolutions relating to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1]

Recalling also the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want",[2] in which the Conference, inter alia, recognized the economic and social significance of good land management, including soil, particularly its contribution to economic growth, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and food security, eradicating poverty, women's empowerment, addressing climate change and improving water availability, stressed that desertification, land degradation and drought are challenges of a global dimension that continue to pose serious challenges to the sustainable development of all countries, in particular developing countries, also stressed the particular challenges this poses for Africa, the least developed countries and the landlocked developing countries, expressed deep concern at the devastating consequences of cyclical drought and famine in Africa, in particular in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region, and called for urgent action through short-, medium- and long-term measures at all levels,

Recalling further that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development recognized the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation and, in view of this, for striving to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development, which should act to catalyse financial resources from a range of public and private sources,

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[2] Resolution 66/288, annex.

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Noting in this regard that combating land degradation, desertification and drought, including through sustainable land management, can contribute to easing forced migration flows influenced by a number of factors, including economic, social, security and environmental concerns, which can, in turn, reduce the current and potential fighting over resources in degraded areas,

Concerned by the devastating consequences of extreme weather phenomena in arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid regions, characterized by recurrent and long spells of drought, flooding and increasing frequency and severity of dust-storms and sandstorms, and their negative impact on the environment and the economy,

Emphasizing the need to promote sustainable land management, sustainable forest management and the restoration of degraded lands in order to combat desertification, land degradation and drought,

Noting that avoiding additional land degradation, especially in arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas, while restoring degraded land, is crucial in order for the rural poor to achieve food security and access to energy and water,

Noting also that desertification, land degradation, drought and climate change are closely related and that, if not addressed, they would pose a serious challenge to sustainable development for all countries, in particular developing countries,

Expressing concern about the fact that currently land degradation, including desertification, affects nearly 2 billion hectares of land, with many regions experiencing more frequent, prolonged periods of drought or flooding, leading to the loss of fertile topsoil through erosion, and that as land becomes degraded it loses the capacity to support livelihoods, which may influence communities to seek out other arable land, including forests and wetlands,

Noting that degraded land, if recovered, would, inter alia, contribute to restoring natural resources, thus potentially improving food security and nutrition in the affected countries, and in the process could, inter alia, contribute to the absorption of carbon emissions,

Noting also the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation at all levels among the parties to and the secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [3] and the Convention on Biological Diversity, [4] while respecting their individual mandates,

Underlining the cross-sectoral nature of desertification, land degradation and drought mitigation, including their economic, social and environmental dimensions, and in this regard inviting all relevant United Nations organizations to cooperate with the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, within their respective mandates, in supporting an effective response to those challenges,

Recalling its resolution 68/309 of 10 September 2014, in which it welcomed the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals [5] and decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group contained in the report shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[4] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

[5] A/68/970 and Corr.1.

development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly,

Noting the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to establish a science-policy interface to facilitate a two-way science-policy dialogue and ensure delivery of policy-relevant information, knowledge and advice on desertification, land degradation and drought,[6]

Recognizing the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security[7] by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012,

Welcoming the offer of the Government of Turkey to host the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in 2015,

Recalling its resolution 64/201 of 21 December 2009, in which it designated the secretariat of the Convention as the focal point of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010-2020),

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;[8]

2. *Calls upon* Member States to take urgent action to reverse desertification, land degradation and drought, as appropriate, with the assistance of the United Nations system, relevant regional and international organizations, multilateral agencies, major groups and other stakeholders;

3. *Reaffirms its resolve*, in accordance with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1] to take coordinated action, nationally, regionally and internationally, to globally monitor land degradation and restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas;

4. *Encourages* the coordination and collaboration of all stakeholders in enhancing the resilience and harnessing the potential of the affected countries;

5. *Reiterates* that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development has reaffirmed women's vital role and their full and equal participation and leadership in all areas of sustainable development, and in this regard invites donors and international organizations, including the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as international financial institutions, regional banks and major groups, including the private sector, to fully integrate their commitments and their considerations on gender equality and women's empowerment and to ensure the participation of women and effective gender mainstreaming in their decision-making in combating desertification, land degradation and drought;

6. *Notes* the importance of the participation of civil society organizations and other stakeholders, including the private sector, in the sessions of the

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[6] ICCD/COP(11)/23/Add.1 and Corr.1, decision 23/COP.11.

[7] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, document CL 144/9 (C 2013/20), appendix D.

[8] A/69/317, sect. II.

Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, as well as the involvement of those stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention and the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance its implementation (2008-2018);[9]

7. *Stresses* the importance of the further development and implementation of scientifically based, sound and socially inclusive methods and indicators for monitoring and assessing the extent of desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as the importance of efforts under way to promote scientific research in accordance with the Convention, and in this respect invites the secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[3] and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[4] within their respective mandates, to collaborate on their activities whenever they are related to desertification, land degradation and drought;

8. *Reiterates* the need for cooperation through the sharing of climate and weather information, forecasting and early warning systems related to desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as to dust storms and sandstorms, at the global, regional and subregional levels, and in this regard invites States and relevant organizations to cooperate in the sharing of related information, forecasting and early warning systems;

9. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020);[10]

10. *Notes with appreciation* the activities undertaken by the secretariat of the Convention and encourages Member States, regional commissions, multilateral agencies and other stakeholders to support the secretariat of the Convention in organizing special activities in observance of the Decade;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session a report on the implementation of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020);

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventieth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa";

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventieth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

75th plenary meeting
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[9] A/C.2/62/7, annex.
[10] A/69/311.